

HALW Inc. ltr dated 2/1/01

February 1, 2001

Mr. James Scheffer
Senior Marine Accident Investigator
National Safety transportation Board
Office of Marine Safety
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20594-2000

**Re: Status Report of Issues Identified in Nieuw Amsterdam, Crew Cabin Fire,
Glacier Bay, May 23, 2000 review**

Dear Mr. Scheffer,

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with a status report of issues identified for company action that have been accomplished or are under consideration to prevent similar casualties in the future.

Attached please find a policy document that requires Masters to:

- **During certain emergencies, send the passengers to lifeboat stations where they can be mustered, accounted for, and controlled while the event is addressed. At lifeboat stations the passengers can be provided status updates, life jackets (if appropriate), blankets or other protection from the environment, and food and drink,**
- **Plan for the movement of passengers from the on deck muster areas into public spaces when weather or other conditions require,**
- **Quickly muster and account for the crew during major emergencies, and exercise this during drills,**
- **Designate a team of at least three crewmembers on the muster list to manage SCBA bottle accountability, recharging, and replacement during fires. The leader of this team will be a Hotel Officer. Each team member will be provided a UHF radio. This function will be exercised during fire drills,**
- **Ensure that only personnel that have had fire fighting training within the past 5 years are assigned to fire squads,**
- **Ensure that Naturalists and other vessel narrators/commentators are briefed on the need to terminate narrations during emergencies,**
- **Provide guidance to pilots, surveyors, inspectors, auditors, contractors, company officials, spouses, and others that are on board for more than 24 hours on what is expected of them in an emergency, with emphasis on not participating in response to the emergency beyond their traditional role on**

- board, e.g. pilots navigate, auditors – inspectors – surveyors monitor activities, etc., and discourage the use of these individuals in firefighting efforts to prevent injury to themselves or others,
- Require a distinction between those alarms and announcements made at the inception of drills and those made at the beginning of a real incident to ensure that crew are informed that it is not a drill,
 - Provide UHF radios for all fire squad members that wear Self Contained Breathing Apparatus' (SCBAs),
 - Ensure compliance with the fit testing requirements of HAL Marine Regulation 600.14.3.3 for SCBAs and smoke masks,
 - Reinforce the requirement for Staff Officers to personally conduct weekly cabin inspections, scheduled and unscheduled,
 - Provide a large digital clock at the command console for use in record keeping,
 - Provide protection from the elements to the passengers and crew that may be on deck for extended periods in cool climates during fires.

References to smoke masks in the attached policy will be removed with the issuance of a First Response policy. This is necessary due to extensive discussions on the issue and the decision to not use smoke masks for any fire fighting activity. We have been searching for a small, lightweight SCBA, similar in size to the EEBAs, to replace the smoke mask, for use in first response. Until one is found we will go with the no smoke mask emergency response policy, which should be out soon. I will copy you as soon as it is issued.

The company has agreed to take the following actions where they have not been implemented in the fleet. For your information we cannot take these actions with relation to Nieuw Amsterdam because it has been sold and transferred to the new owner:

- Provide a microphone pickup in the ECR for the voice recorder on the bridge,
 - Where needed, upgrade UHF coverage, with fire screen doors and watertight doors closed, to ensure adequate communications during an emergency,
 - Provide a dedicated phone line between the ECR and the command console on the bridge,
 - Connect a fixed UHF receiver input to the bridge voice recorder,
 - Acquire thermal imagers for use in fire fighting and cabin searches. Provide one to each fire squad and the rescue team,
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- Require certain members of the Rescue Team to have 4 part Basic Safety training and be equipped with SCBAs (and UHF radios for each SCBA wearer), to allow searches in smoke filled spaces without disrupting ongoing fire fighting operations,
 - Require that Communications Officers hold a GMDSS license.

I hope you find this information useful in your review of this incident. If you have any questions or need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Rene Roussel
Director Maritime Affairs

Attachment:

c.c. S. Kruse